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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [EAID](#) [PINR](#) [MD](#) [RO](#)
SUBJECT: ROMAINIAN PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR ILINOIU
SUPPORTS DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN MOLDOVA

Classified by: Ambassador Asif J. Chaudhry for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: On October 12, U.S. Ambassador to Romania and U.S. Ambassador to Moldova (who was visiting Bucharest) met with Anca Ilinoiu, Foreign Policy Counselor to President Basescu. Ilinoiu explained that Moldova was a very important foreign policy priority for Romania. She noted that Romania favored a western-looking government in Moldova, and now, with the Alliance of European Integration at the helm, had an opportunity to provide support for such an endeavor, and planned to do so.

¶2. (C) Ilinoiu was disappointed by the weak support the EU was showing for the new government. She said that Romania was planning its own assistance and in the coming days would announce energy support for Moldova, providing electricity by linking the two grids. She noted how important assistance would be for keeping the new pro-Western government afloat, and argued that success for the Alliance would be a geo-political success for the West. This cable was cleared by Ambassador Gitenstein.

End Summary.

Fears Ukrainianization of Moldova

¶3. (C) Though Ilinoiu was pleased with the Alliance's Western-looking orientation, she expressed some concerns about problems within the Alliance, particularly the problems between Presidential-hopeful Lupu and Prime Minister Filat. She was also very critical of Parliamentary Speaker Ghimpu, who she thought was making the Alliance look bad internationally. Ilinoiu believed that Ghimpu's mistakes in running the Parliament were hurting the Alliance and could even be challenged in Constitutional Court. She suggested that as we consider technical assistance for Moldova, we consider legal guidance for the Speaker in order to help him learn how to run a parliament successfully.

¶4. (C) Ilinoiu perceived the power struggles and arguments between Lupu and Filat as a potential scenario for the "Ukrainianization" of Moldova, i.e. a situation where after overthrowing a Communist government, the President and Prime Minister are then consumed by their own internecine rivalries and cannot work together. She thought that this would serve Russia's purposes in Moldova. On the other hand, she argued, our efforts have to be aimed at preventing

any growing mistrust between the leaders.

Assistance to Moldova Critical; EU Disappointing

15. (C) Ilinoiu raised the recent (September 29-30) visit of Prime Minister Filat and Foreign Minister Leance to Brussels, noting her disappointment with the lack of EU support for Moldova. In comparison, she praised the US assistance effort, particularly the timing of our MCC announcement just after the new government was in place. Ilinoiu thought that bilateral assistance for Moldova was absolutely critical at this time. She expressed the hope that both the EU as an organization and the individual member countries bilaterally would do more to assist Moldova.

16. (C) Ilinoiu expressed mistrust of European Union Special Representative Kalman Mizsei, saying that she was concerned about the nature of his relations with Russia. Ilinoiu thought Mizsei might be feeding bad information to Solana, and thus Solana is not getting the right message. She expects to see a change in the Special Representative's position soon, putting someone "more attuned with the EU" into the job.

17. (C) Noting how important assistance would be for keeping the new Alliance government afloat, Ilinoiu expressed some disappointment that up to this point only Poland had stepped forward with a

CHISINAU 00000819 002 OF 003

specific pledge of assistance to Moldova, and hoped that others would do so too. Ilinoiu said that the Government of Romania was considering a significant amount of assistance. Without naming a specific dollar figure, she said they were thinking of something significantly more than what Poland was giving.

18. (C) Ilinoiu hoped that Western partners would not be waiting for political stability in order to provide assistance, but rather thought that the West should provide assistance to help create political stability. She noted that the stability and success of the Alliance would depend upon their gaining complete control over key government institutions. She lamented that sometimes Western partners do not understand that simply taking over the Prime Minister's seat does not mean real authority unless there is control over such institutions as the Prosecutor General's Office, the National Bank, the Security organs (SIS), and the media.

Romania to Provide Energy Assistance

19. (C) Ilinoiu indicated that part of Romanian assistance to Moldova could be in the form of energy support for the winter. She said that Romania had surplus electricity which could easily be provided to Moldova. Providing energy assistance would help in getting through the winter cold. Even more significantly, energy would help Moldova avoid vulnerability to Russian blackmail that results from complete energy dependence upon Russian gas. However, she noted, Romania was still trying to figure out the best way to connect to the Moldovan electricity grid.

110. (C) Ilinoiu said that an announcement of Romanian's energy assistance for Moldova could come within the next week to ten days. However,

it would still require some investment to actually connect the two systems before the electricity could flow. Noting Romania needed to come up with some hard cash to do this, she asked if MCC could be used for that purpose. Ambassador Chaudhry explained that the MCC Compact will support other programs, but noted that USAID has looked at the issue of connectivity between Moldovan and European energy grids. He mentioned two USAID experts who had carried out this study and would be available to provide advice on how to accomplish this safely and quickly.

¶11. (C) Ilinoiu noted that Moldova also needed to get independence from the Russian gas lines. She mentioned the possibility of using the "Pan-Arab" pipeline which brings gas from Egypt (NFI).

Cultural Support for Moldova

¶12. (C) With respect to cultural support for Moldova, there was a common understanding between the two Ambassadors and the Presidential advisor on the need to find a way to change people's mindset to think westward. Ambassador Chaudhry proposed that one way to do this would be to introduce English-language films with Romanian-language subtitles, (which are already available in Romania) to the Moldovan market. The group agreed to explore that possibility.

¶13. (C) Ilinoiu mentioned efforts being made to introduce Romanian television to the Moldovan audience. She mentioned one program, Realitate, which she compared to a Romanian version of CNN, which was looking for ways to expand its coverage to a broader audience in Moldova.

¶14. (C) Ultimately, Ilinoiu linked the success of the Alliance to the overall geo-political success of the European Union and the West, saying that whatever happened in Moldova could be a model. If a successful transition could be made to a stable, western-style government, that same model for transition could be used for Ukraine in the coming Ukrainian elections.

CHISINAU 00000819 003 OF 003

Ready to Move Forward on Border Agreements

¶15. (C) Ilinoiu said that the Romanian government was looking into entering into a border agreement which would provide the possibility of up to 50 kms of easier access and other border arrangements. Such an agreement would help pave the way for opening the consulates on both sides which have been promised for some time but remain stalled.

¶16. (C) Ilinoiu also alluded to the willingness of the Romanian government to work out a border agreement with Moldova. She chose her words very carefully, not to give the impression she was saying a "border treaty" but saying that they were willing to sign a "trans-border treaty."

Important to Help Gagauzia

¶17. (C) She thought that the West needed to pay very special attention to Gagauzia, because Gagauzia had the potential for the Communists to use it to create cultural tensions. Fearing the

Communists could exploit ethnic and pro-Russian linguistic sentiment to build a stronghold in Gagauzia, she encouraged Ambassador Chaudhry to visit Gagauzia as often as possible and start looking at Gagauzia as a potential place for assistance activities. The Ambassador briefed her on some USG efforts to provide assistance to Gagauzia, including a project by Engineers without Borders and North Carolina guards to provide assistance to schools in Gagauzia.

Comment

¶18. (C) Ilinoiu's concern for Moldova was impressive. She clearly wishes to see her eastern neighbor making the right steps towards developing in a Western-looking democratic way. However, she is concerned that the democratic institutions in Moldova and the capacities of the Alliance are still relatively weak. Both will need encouragement and financial support from the West to ensure their viability in the long run. In that effort, Romanian interests in Moldova seem to coincide with our own, and many of the desires expressed for coordination and support are exactly in line with our own goals. It is clear that a visible demonstration of support for Moldova's democracy at a high political level in the US and EU is desirable.

¶19. (C) We note that her comments reflected her bias for Prime Minister Filat's positions. It seems her understanding of the personalities within the Alliance reflect his biases. We were surprised about the extent to which she was critical of Ghimpu, given his long-term position as the traditional pro-Romanian unionist. Despite the image in Moldova (particularly among Communists) of Romanian support for integration, there was no apparent hint of a pro-integration policy. Quite the opposite, her conversation clearly indicated a desire to support the sovereignty of Moldova as separate pro-Western state and help it join the European Union.

CHAUDHRY